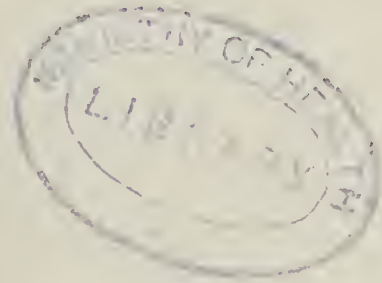


Leary

RAMSEY
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.




Annual Report

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH

UPON THE

Sanitary Conditions of the District
during the Year 1955.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b3002867x>

TO THE RAMSEY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Council.

I beg to submit the Annual Report on the sanitary conditions of the district for the year ending 31st December, 1955.

STAFF :

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

F. D. F. STEEDE, M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H.

SANITARY INSPECTOR

G. O. MARCH, A.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area	...	...	...	...	...	15,980 acres
Estimated Population (mid 1955)	...					5,700
Number of Inhabited Houses, end of 1955					}	1,785
Rateable Value	...	...	...			£23,651
Value of Penny Rate	...	...	...			£87 : 11 : 8

The health of the district remains very good.

The birth rate, still high, shows a fractional decline over the figures for last year, while the death rate figure remains unchanged. Nevertheless, the population shows no tendency to increase, and until one of the principal limiting factors, more and better housing conditions can be provided, no improvement in this connection can be anticipated. The Council have been hampered in providing these conditions by the disappointing delays which continue to occur in starting the main drainage scheme for the town area, a project long overdue. Some surprise was occasioned by the refusal to sanction a temporary aggravation of the general situation in pumping the effluent from the new secondary modern school—a procedure which forms an integral part of the comprehensive scheme—with the result that a small sewage disposal plant had to be constructed which will eventually be redundant. However, the delays which have occurred make it fairly certain that the Council will be unable to deal with their slum clearance problem within the initial five-year period.

The water situation should show marked improvement by 1957, when it is hoped that the scheme, again delayed by factors outside the Council's control, to take water from the Cambridge University and Town Waterworks Company will almost certainly be in operation. In the meantime, no relaxation can be permitted as regards water restrictions. The question of more storage facilities locally, however, has still to be considered in the face of an expected increase in consumption.

During the year there were four cases diagnosed as suffering from Poliomyelitis, and it is anticipated that immunisation will give us a substantial measure of control in this crippling disease. I make no apology for again emphasising the necessity for ensuring that there is no relaxation in our immunisation campaign against Diphtheria. During the year 109 children under 15 years of age received an initial course of protection against Diphtheria, a substantial increase over last year's figure, and for which much of the credit must go to the work of the County Council's nursing staff. Protection is now available for children against Whooping Cough under the County Council's progressive immunisation policy. It is felt that in an agricultural district such as this, the possibility of extending this policy to include Tetanus in addition might be given further consideration.

Considerable delay continues to be experienced in getting aged persons into residential accommodation even in emergency. Unfortunately, it is often impossible to persuade old people who are obviously heading for difficulties to enter an old persons home until some factor arises which precipitates a crisis. In Ramsey, as there is at present no residential accommodation in the district itself, old people are more reluctant to leave their own homes as it entails leaving Ramsey in addition.

In conclusion, I should like to thank all the Members of the Council and their officers and staff for their ready help and co-operation at all times.

VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births.

Birth Rate per 1000 population 18.4

Still Births.

Rate per 1000 total births 18.7

Deaths.

Death Rate per 1000 population 10.5

Deaths from Puerperal Causes per 1000 total }
(live and still) births } Nil

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—

All infants per 1,000 live births 28.6

Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate live births 30.6

Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate live births Nil

	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Actual No. of Deaths	2	7	3	3	2	3
Rates all Infants per 1,000 Live Births	21.5	62.5	27.8	25.6	18.5	28.6

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) 14

Deaths from Measles (all ages) Nil

Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ... Nil

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years) ... Nil

RATES.

	Per 1000 Population.				Per 1000 live births
	Live Births	Still Births	Crude Death Rate	Stand'izd Death Rate	Infantile Mortality
Ramsey U. D. ...	18.4	0.35	10.5	10.7	28.6
England & Wales ...	15.0	0.35	11.7	11.7	25.9

The following table shows the classification of deaths from all causes, Registrar General's figures.

						M.	F.	Total
Causes of Death.						35	25	60
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
2.	Tuberculosis, other	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
3.	Syphilitic disease	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
4.	Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
5.	Whooping cough	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
6.	Meningococcal infections	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
8.	Measles	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
10.	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	...	...	...	...	2	1	3
11.	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus.	...	...	...	...	4	—	4
12.	Malignant neoplasm, breast	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
13.	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
14.	Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasms	...	...	...	...	3	4	7
15.	Leukæmia, aleukæmia	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
16.	Diabetes	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	...	...	...	4	5	9
18.	Coronary disease, angina	...	...	...	...	4	1	5
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
20.	Other heart disease	...	...	...	...	6	6	12
21.	Other circulatory disease	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
22.	Influenza	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
23.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	—	1	1
24.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	—	1	1
25.	Other disease of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhœa	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	...	—	1	1
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
31.	Congenital malformations	...	...	...	...	—	1	1
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	...	5	3	8
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	...	...	3	—	3
34.	All other accidents	...	...	...	...	—	1	1
35.	Suicide	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
36.	Homicide and operations of War	...	...	...	...	—	—	—

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

(a) Laboratory Facilities :

No change has taken place in the general arrangements during the past year. Bacteriological specimens from Practitioners in the district are examined at the Pathological Department of the Memorial Hospital, Peterborough, or by the Pathological Laboratory, Tennis Court Road, Cambridge.

(b) Ambulance Facilities :

(1) For the removal of infectious cases a motor ambulance is available at the Isolation Hospital, Peterborough at present.

(2) For non-infectious and accident cases, ambulances are provided by the Huntingdon County Council from their depot at Huntingdon.

(c) Nursing in the Home :

Nursing in the home is carried out by three qualified nurses employed by the Huntingdon County Council. All nurses are certified midwives and attend the majority of maternity cases under the Domiciliary Midwifery Scheme.

All cases of Tuberculosis are visited by the Tuberculosis Health Visitor and a report with details of home conditions and circumstances is completed.

(d) Clinics and Treatment Centres :

Infant Welfare Clinics are held at the Health Clinic on the 2nd and last Wednesday every month from 2—4 p.m.

The following additional Clinics are provided :-

School Clinic
(Minor Ailment)

Health Clinic 3rd Thursday
of the month, 10—12 noon

Ante-Natal	The Health Clinic Every Tuesday — 2—4 p.m.
Dental Clinic	The Health Clinic 2nd Wednesday of the month 2—4 p.m.
Eyes	London Road Clinic, Old Fletton By Appointment
Tuberculosis	1, Thorpe Road, Peterborough Every Monday — 2—4 p.m. By Appointment.
Orthopædic	Memorial Hospital, Peterborough Every Monday, 2.15 p.m. By Appointment.
Nose, Throat and Ear Clinic	Memorial Hospital, Peterborough every Wednesday at 3 p.m. By Appointment.
Venereal Diseases	Memorial Hospital, Peterborough
Women Only	Fridays — 10.30—12 noon. Wednesdays — 5.30—7 p.m.
Men Only	Mondays — 5.30—7 p.m. Thursdays — 5.30—7 p.m.

Under the Ante and Post Natal Scheme, provided by the County Council, expectant mothers are examined twice during their pregnancy (or oftener if necessary) and once after confinement.

(e) Hospitals :

- (1) Fever—The treatment of infectious diseases is carried out at the Hospital for Infectious Disease at Peterborough
- (2) The Peterborough Memorial Hospital, the County Hospital, Huntingdon and Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, continue to carry out the general hospital services in the district.
- (3) Provision is made for Maternity cases at the Maternity Hospital, Paxton Park at the present time.

TO THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Sir,

I beg to submit my report for the year ending 31st December, 1955.

Housing :

It will be seen from the figures below that limited progress is being made with houses unfit for habitation, and as these become vacant appropriate action is being taken under the Housing Acts.

Work on the preparation of a Clearance Area involving 10 houses is in hand, the tenants to be rehoused in Council houses.

A preliminary survey of all the unfit houses was carried out during the year under the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954. A detailed survey of each individual house was found to be impossible within the time limit, owing to lack of staff to carry out the work. An extract from the Form of Proposal sent to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government is set out below.

Number of permanent dwellings in area	1,764
---------------------------------------	-----	-----	-------

Estimated number of houses unfit for human habitation	211
---	-----

Number of above houses to be included in Clearance Areas	89
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

The Council have undertaken to endeavour to deal with this problem within 5 years, but this is subject to houses being available for the displaced families.

Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :

Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	30
---	-----	-----	----

Number of inspections made for the purpose	134
--	-----	-----	-----

Number of houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	24
---	----

Number of houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	5
--	-----	-----	-----	---

Remedy of defects without service of formal notices :

Number of dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	4
---	---

Action under Statutory Powers :

Number of dwelling houses which were rendered so fit after service of formal notice (Public Health Acts) ...	Nil
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made (Housing Act, 1936, Section 11) ...	6
Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	8
Number of separate tenements in respect of which Closing Orders were made	7
Number of undertakings accepted from owners not to use houses for human habitation	1

New Housing :

During the year, 22 "Unity" houses were erected by the Council and 21 new houses were built by private enterprise.

A scheme for a further 18 Council houses at Westfield is in hand which will complete this housing estate. No further progress has been made with regard to future housing sites, as this is closely linked with the proposed sewage scheme for the Town.

The number of applications for Council houses at the end of the year was 210, but this figure does not show the total problem as all slum clearance needs are not included.

Nuisances :

Abated as a result of informal action	38
Abated as a result of statutory action	Nil

Analysis :

Premises	9
Cesspools and Sewers	11
Accumulation of Refuse	6
Foul ditches, etc.,	5
Drains	8
Animals	2
Dampness	5

Inspections and Visits :

Public Health Acts	77
Housing Acts	144
Sewers	49
Drain Tests	51
Rodent Control	2
Food and Drugs Acts	6
Meat and Food Inspection	426
Bakehouses	3
Cafes	3
Shops	9
Moveable Dwellings	87
Refuse Collection and Disposal	34
Infectious Disease	47
Mortuary	6
Factories and Workshops	10
Water Supply	463
Council House Maintenance	601
New Buildings	108
Highways	251
Playing Field	15
Schools	2
Miscellaneous	71
Total ...	2,465

Closets :

Number of houses at the end of the year with W.C.'s ...	921
" " " Pail Closets ...	846
" " " Privy Vaults ...	18
Number of W.C.'s constructed during the year for new houses	52
Number of W.C.'s newly constructed for old property ...	18
Number of Privies converted to Pail Closets	2
Number of Privies converted to W.C.'s	2

Milk Supply :

Three milk distributors are registered and the following supplementary licences for the sale of milk were granted during the year:—

Tuberculin Tested	Pasteurised	Sterilised
3	3	2

Water Supply :

Samples from the water supply from the Ramsey and St. Ives Joint Water Board are taken at regular intervals and forwarded to the Pathological Laboratory, Memorial Hospital, Peterborough.

Work is now in hand in laying mains to bring a supply of water from Cambridge, and it is hoped that this will improve both the quality and the supply.

The average water consumption for all purposes per head of population per day is 19 gallons.

Number of samples taken from the main piped supply ...	6
--	---

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal :

The need of an up-to-date system of sewerage for Ramsey Town is still an urgent necessity, as pointed out in the Annual Reports of previous years, and my observations in the 1954 Report still apply.

A Public Enquiry was held in June, 1955, into the proposed scheme to provide sewers and disposal works for the town area, and this has now been approved. The scheme, however, is now held up by financial restrictions.

Factories Act, 1937 :

Total No. of Factories (including Bakehouses) ...	...	23
Number in which nuisances were abated ...	...	1

Meat and Food Inspection :

Slaughtering is being carried out at the 4 slaughterhouses in the area, and generally speaking I find that the butchers co-operate as far as possible for the purpose of meat inspection.

The majority of carcasses have been inspected, although this entails a considerable amount of work outside office hours, and I would like to express my appreciation of the assistance given by Mr. A. E. Bennett, A.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., of Norman Cross, who has carried out meat inspection in my absence, due to illness, etc.

The following table shows the results of the meat inspection service:—

Number of Slaughterhouses on register ...	...	4
Number of visits for meat inspection ...	...	420

Carcases Inspected and Condemned :

				Cattle exclud- ing			Sheep and	
				Cows	Cows	Calves	Lambs	Pigs
No. killed	...	...	...	65	4	—	155 +	3809 +
No. Inspected	...	...	...	65	4	—	155	3809
All diseases except								
Tuberculosis:—								
Whole carcases con-								
demned	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	7
Carcases of which								
some part or organ								
was condemned	...			1	—	—	—	27
Percentage of the num-								
ber inspected affec-								
ted with disease								
other than tubercu-								
losis	...	...	...	1.54%	Nil	—	.64%	.89%
Tuberculosis only:—								
Whole carcases con-								
demned	...	...	...	1	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which								
some part or organ								
was condemned	...			—	1	—	—	16
Percentage of the num-								
ber inspected affec-								
ted with tubercu-								
losis	...	...	...	1.54%	25%	—	—	.42%
Total weight of meat condemned				...	...	...	...	2,256 lbs.

Food Premises :

The number of food premises in the area by type of business are as under:—

Butchers' Shops	...	...	...	...	...	10
Grocers and General Stores	...	...	...	...	...	23
Greengrocers	...	...	...	...	...	6
Bakers	...	...	...	...	...	6
Confectioners	...	...	...	...	...	19
Fish Premises	...	...	...	...	...	4
Cafes, Restaurants, Hotels	...	...	...	...	...	5
						—
					Total	73

Number of Premises registered under Section 14 of
Food and Drugs Act, 1938 18

Refuse Collection :

The refuse collection scheme for the Town, with labour on a contract basis, and collections at weekly intervals, continues to

run smoothly. The Stocking Fen refuse tip is now almost full and controlled tipping has started in the pits on the site of the disused brick kilns at the rear of Brick Kilns Farm.

Refuse is collected by contract on a fortnightly basis from Ramsey St. Mary's, The Heights, Ramsey Mereside and Forty Feet Bridge and disposed of at the above tip.

The collection of night soil is carried out by contract twice weekly in the town and weekly in the outside areas. Although this is an absolute necessity, it is a system which is full of complaints and one which can only be abolished by the provision of a proper sewerage scheme.

Moveable Dwellings :

During the year 14 licences were granted to erect station and use moveable dwellings under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936. All moveable dwellings are inspected from time to time to ensure that the sanitary arrangements are satisfactory.

A case arose of moveable dwellings being stationed on land for more than 60 days in a year without any licences being obtained under the Public Health Act, 1936, and proceedings were taken against the owner before the Magistrates Court on the 21st December, 1955. The action was successful, and the owner was instructed to clear the land within 28 days, and a fine of £1 with £2 costs was imposed.

From the number of enquiries and applications received for stationing moveable dwellings, I feel that there is a need for an authorised caravan site in the vicinity of Ramsey, this being partially due to the fact that many personnel at R.A.F. Upwood live in caravans and an increase in the number being used as permanent dwellings.

Rodent Control :

A rodent control service is provided for private and business premises in the area under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949. The rodent operator made 614 visits to various properties and carried out 79 treatments in cases of infestation.

General :

Some progress has been made during the year on slum clearance and the provision of a sewerage scheme for the Town, but I feel that in spite of the financial restrictions, pressure should be brought to bear to make a start on this scheme as the future housing programme is held up until modern sewers are available.

In conclusion may I express my appreciation of the active interest and support of the Chairman and Members of the Council, the Medical Officer of Health for his advice and the Staff and Workmen for their co-operation.

G. O. MARCH,

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

The following table gives the incidence of notifiable diseases (other than tuberculosis) in the area during 1955.

DISEASE															
			TOTAL												
			under 1 year												
			1 - 2												
			2 - 3												
			3 - 4												
			4 - 5												
			5 - 10												
			10 - 15												
			15 - 20												
			20 - 35												
			35 - 45												
			45 - 65												
			65 & upwards												
			Cases admitted to Hospital												
			Total Deaths												
Erysipelas ...	...	...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Smallpox ...	...	...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	...	...	5	-	-	1	1	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Diphtheria ...	...	...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	...	...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia ...	...	...	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	1	-
Measles ...	...	...	24	1	-	2	5	4	11	1	1	-	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	...	...	8	-	-	3	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Poliomyltitis	...	...	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	1	-	-	-
Dysentery ...	...	...	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-

TUBERCULOSIS.

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
5	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL :—	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	—

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

F. D. F. STEEDE,

Medical Officer of Health

